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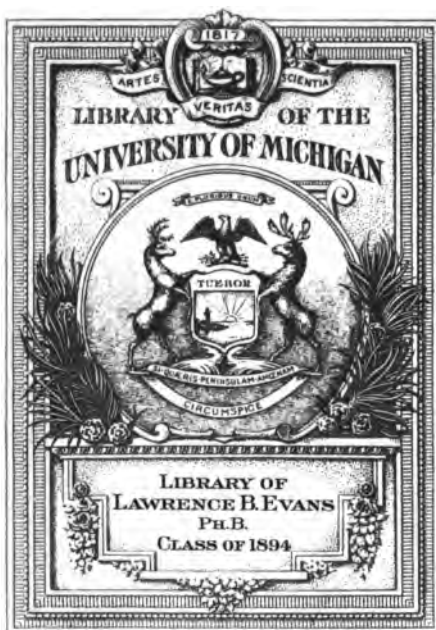
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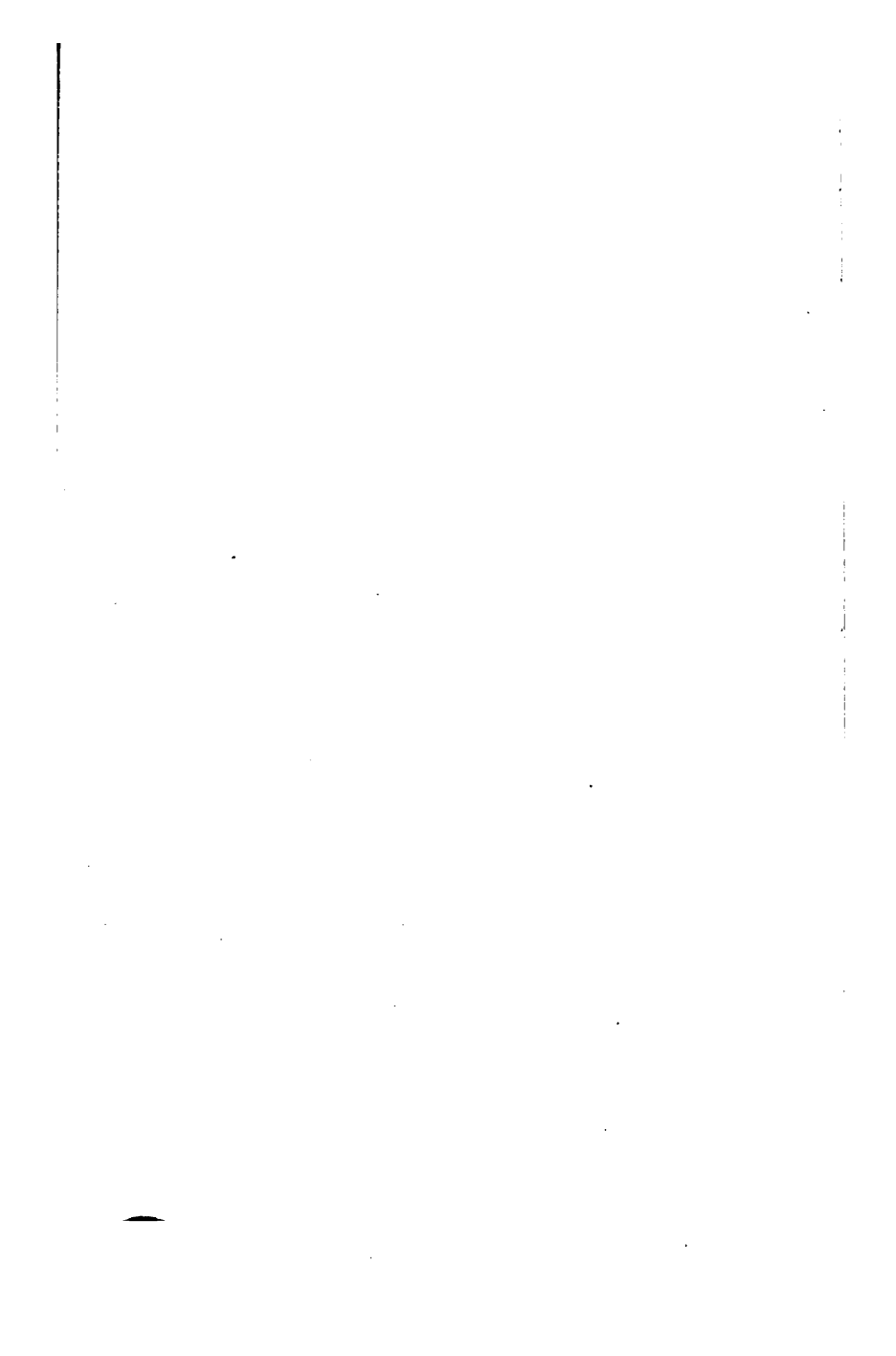
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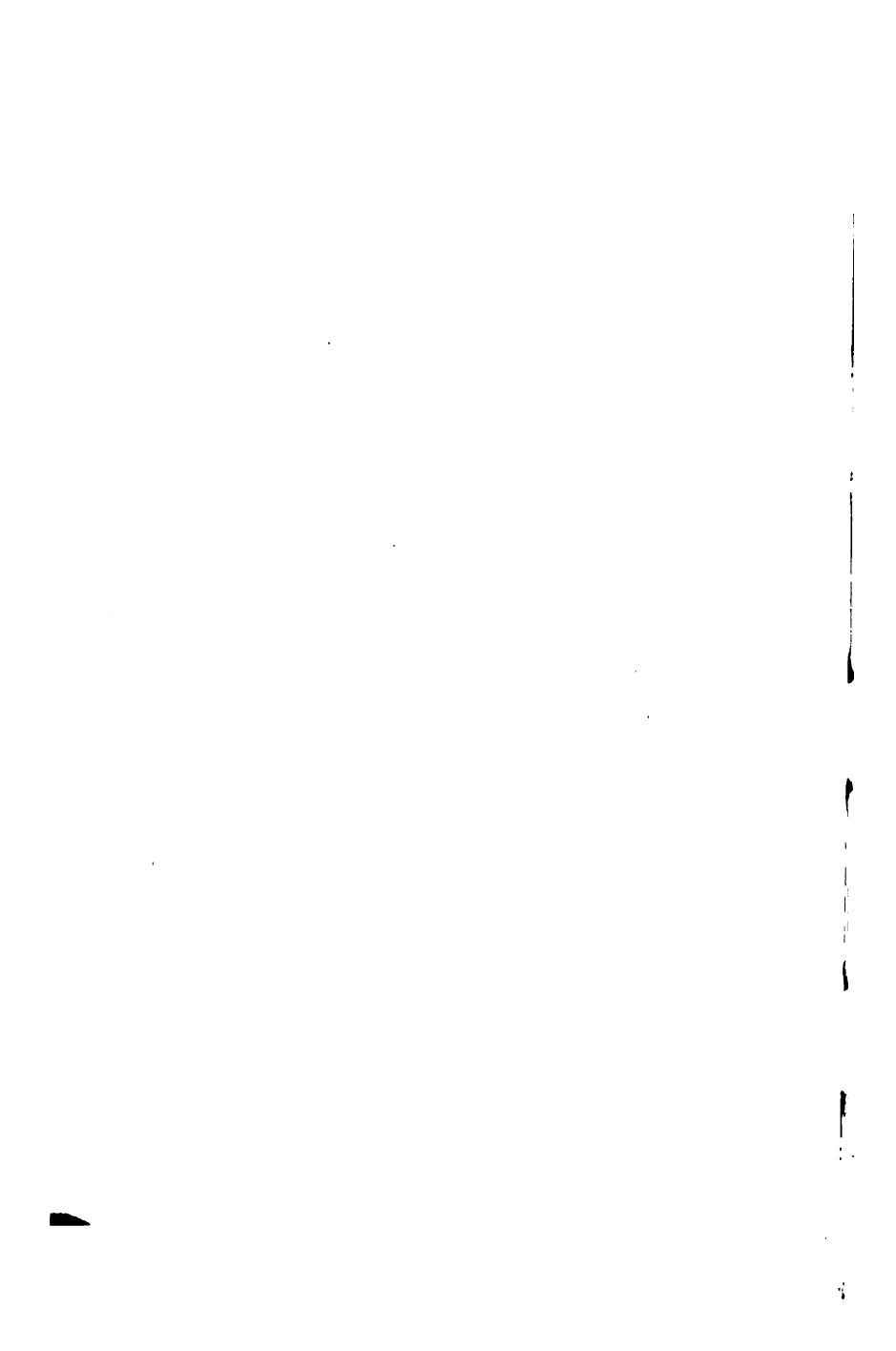
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**THE SPLENDOR OF THE
HUMAN BODY**



**THE SPLENDOR OF
THE HUMAN BODY**
**A REPARATION AND
AN APPEAL**

BY
Handwritten signature
THE RT. REV. C. H. BRENT, D.D.
BISHOP OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS



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TO
MY FRIENDS
THE MASTERS AND BOYS OF
GROTON SCHOOL
AND
ALL THE PURE IN HEART

Library of L. B. Evans
3-3-31

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THE SPLENDOR OF THE HUMAN BODY

I ORDER

I am fearfully and wonderfully made. : Ps. 139 : 14.

Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty : for it was perfect through my comeliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. : Ezek. 16 : 14.

WITHOUT a conviction of the splendor of the human body, belief in the splendor of the human soul, of which the body is the living dress, is likely to fade away in a golden mist of inoperative sentiment. It is a truth that is needed by youth as a bulwark against those subtle enemies that lurk about the threshold of early life, as well as a key to wholesome and joyous living.

Many years ago I heard an illustrated lecture on the ear by a prominent aurist. The intricate machinery of that wonderful little workshop in which the hammer

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and anvil ply their ceaseless toil I can no longer describe. But the consciousness, which the lecturer aroused, of the delicate beauty and the incomparable mechanism that lie hidden within us has never left me. If a single organ is so splendid, and is sufficient to inspire richly endowed manhood to a life-study of its marvels, how great a thing must the whole body be! The ear is not unique in its perfection. It is but one of a unity of organs, each in its separate setting throbbing out its allotted task, and all together forming an interdependent relationship so intimate that the performance of each is registered in all with unerring certainty and punctual regularity. The ebb and flow of the blood in its restless tide, the telegraphic system of the orderly tangle of nerves, the cave of winds within the breast with its supply of pure air, the drainage apparatus that catches and expels the waste,—in their

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symmetry, in the rhythmic smoothness of their operations, in their sympathy with one another, rival the music of the spheres.

This within. While without is the warm texture of the flesh with its soft shadows and delicate pencillings, the curve of the limbs gathering into themselves every known line of beauty, the mobile features, — which together go to make up the one token on earth of personality, the ambassador of the soul's errands, and the channel of its education. As a thing of beauty it belongs to the divine order which courts the use of knife and microscope. Scratch a painting, chip a statue, and man-made beauty dies. Disturb the surface of the body — or the meanest leaf, for that matter — and new wonders come to light, bearing witness to that order and magnitude in which the highest beauty consists. "Attempts have been made to

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surpass nature and to represent a body corresponding to an artistic ideal. To arrive at something more beautiful than man, the wings of birds or the characters of some other creatures have been added to his presentment. Such attempts have had no other result than to show that the human form, as created by nature, cannot be surpassed. The ancient conception of the human body as the artistic ideal has been fully justified."

I understand the enthusiasm of the physician in the great vocation which bids him defend this harmony against discord, and coax back its music when it is out of tune; or the reverent wonder of the artist who counts the unadorned body in its naked splendor his most worthy, his purest study, though I am not oblivious to lurking dangers in proclaiming "the value and significance of flesh;" but one must not be scared away from the fuller

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recognition of truth because it entails peril.

The body is the crowning marvel in the world of miracles in which we live. Fearfully and wonderfully made, it claims our respect not only because God fashioned it, but because He fashioned it so well—because it is a thing of beauty, a perfection of mechanism.¹

You have often watched with awe, doubtless, some triumph of mechanical art, a whirl of flying wheels and plunging bars, and viewed it as though it were an independent creation; your imagination has unconsciously attributed to it a volition and purpose of its own. But in comparison with the body its wonders grow

¹ *There are what have been aptly termed "disharmonies" in the organization of man. But all that is rudimentary in him is the link that binds him to his historic and physiological past. If it does nothing else it "puts at the disposal of science information of great value for the philosophic conception of man."*

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as pale as the stars at noonday. Without the human mechanism to feed, control, and direct it, it is nothing but a useless mass of polished metal. Machinery is dependent upon and an adjunct of man's body—the loom of the hand; the railroad train of the legs; the telescope of the eye, and so on. Again, the human system alone possesses inherent power of recovery and self-repair; and even though there be, for instance, a higher form of lever than that which raises the arm, the arm is skilled to appropriate and operate it with a minimum of effort. Thus a mechanism becomes more truly a part of man's physical organism than if it were transformed into fibre and muscle. At any rate, without the perfection of the body machinery is foolishness.

Consider. True appreciation of values finds utterance in a careful adaptation of what we prize to the end for which it

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exists. Abuse on the other hand is the practical expression of ignorance or contempt of values. In the case of a machine we first learn its purpose, then try to spin the wheels toward accomplishment. That is use. In the case of the human mechanism, reverence or appreciation of value begins in seeking its highest function. Experience declares that it is not only the shrine of the soul, but also the sole agent by which it can fetch and carry—we can know nothing without the body and we can communicate nothing without the body.

There are two false conceptions regarding the function of the body, each being the antipodes of the other, which cause it to be soiled, and strained, and wrecked in awful waste—that it is a toy of the passions on the one hand, and the enemy of the soul on the other.

The sensualist holds it to be a toy. He

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tosses its treasures to the emotions until they cease to be emotions and become harpies, defiling whatever they touch in himself and others. To maintain that the body is not the toy of the passions is not to say that it may not be the instrument of the passions. This last it is. There is not a desire, an emotion, a passion planted by God in man that has not its legitimate satisfaction. The sensualist is not a self-destroyer because he gives vent to passion, but because he is lawless in exercising it. The same act may be a sacrament, or a sin; a refined courtesy, or a coarse brutality; a hallowing of the body by noble use, or a cursing of it by rough abuse. He who makes it the latter bars the way to using it as the former. For instance, the man whose wont it is to count the kiss a careless pleasure can never know it as a hallowed sacrament. So resentful is the body of desecration that it takes vengeance on

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the offender by refusing to register or transmit the finer feelings and grander passions when its possessor has failed to honour it duly. In excess or in abuse of liberty is riot.

Nor is the function of the body to act as a discipline to be borne as a criminal bears his penalty; neither is it an enemy to be trodden under foot. This is the ascetic as distinguished from the Christian view; somehow it leaves out of sight the fact that God made the body as well as the soul. It is true that "the flesh" is put in antagonism to "the spirit" in the Scriptures. But the reference is not to the physical self. The phrase is metaphorical, indicating our evil tendencies, just as "the heart" is a metaphor indicating our deeper affections. The discipline of the soul, which is another word for "self," requires that the body should share in the shadows not less than the lights of the inner ex-

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perience. A grieving spirit has not to bid the body to fast. It instinctively falls into line. But this is a vastly different thing from treating the body as an enemy. Sometimes, more often than we are ready to admit, it is advisable for the sake of safety to pluck out a right eye or to cut off a right arm. But we do it for the same reason that the surgeon amputates a limb—a desperate resort in desperate conditions. It is not because the body is our enemy, but lest, because of evil heredity, or over-indulgence in the past, we run the risk of desecrating it and so of destroying its capacity for fine work. It is reverence and not contempt for the body that is the true motive of self-discipline, and when we are forced to it in its sterner phases we must—so Christ said—*go through life maimed*. The choice is of one of two evils—momentary eccentricity on the one hand, or irreparable loss to the whole cha-

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racter on the other. And so men who know themselves give up pleasures that in essence are not only harmless but may be even helpful to others, because they recognize their own inability, from whatever cause, to use them innocently or in moderation.

To lash the body as our foe is in itself as great an indignity as to treat it as a toy, and it will resent the one not less than the other. "It is proper to live agreeably to Nature. . . . Should you drive her out with a pitchfork, still she will every time speed back, and victoriously, by stealthy degrees, burst through your morbid squeamishness." Hence it is that

*My business is not to remake myself
But make the absolute best of what God made.*

Asceticism is an attempt to destroy that which is indestructible; it is the declaration of war between the two prime elements of personality. Christian self-dis-

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cipline, on the other hand, is an effort toward unity and completeness.

Those of us who have studied the more famous of the surviving monuments of classic art have perhaps been startled by the sense of reverence aroused in the presence of some of the masterly embodiments of the worship of the human body that have defied the iconoclastic hand of time. We felt ashamed, it may be, that inspiration should come to us from the worldly loves of heathen days, until beneath all that was gross and materialistic we discerned the human soul struggling in its infant might to give utterance to its recognition of the sacredness of the body that God made, the body whose renown went forth among the heathen for its beauty. It was a wild groping in the dark and ran to riotous demonstration in its youthful exuberance, but somehow it set vibrating a chord of music which later

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Christian thought claimed for its own. Early Christian art was mainly symbolic and showed little or no interest in the rich splendor of material form as such. So intent—and for the time being necessarily so—was Christianity on otherworldliness that she had no eye for the beauty of now and here. An uncomely asceticism strained human nature to the limit. But a revolt came in the form of a renaissance which was not so much a revival as a spiritual resurrection, and a Christian interpretation, of classic thought and work. Then men began to wake to the realization that the world was God's world, and that the human body, though not worthy of worship, was perfect with God's comeliness, claiming our reverence:

Is not God now in the world His power first made? ,

In our day the pendulum has swung too far, and the moderation of renaissance times has given place to a widespread

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sense-worship. The cure lies not in a reversion to the moral fierceness of asceticism, nor in Puritan casuistry, but in insistence upon the perfection of the human mechanism and its capacity for noble uses. Men must be inspired from a worship which desecrates to a reverence which exalts and saves, until they know the body as the "basement for the soul's emprise," and rejoice in it.

II MAGNITUDE

My frame was not hidden from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see mine unperfect substance. And in thy book were all my members written, which day by day were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. : Ps. 139 : 15, 16.

WHEN Darwin unfolded to a startled and skeptical Christendom the method of God in creation, he gave us a new motive for self-reverence. The human body is now seen to be not only a small though important part of a vast and marvellous universe: it is the completion as well as the crown of God's creative work, an epitome of all that has gone before, gathering into itself the best that the Creator has done ever since that remote day when He began to lay the hand of order on chaos. Evolution is, as it were, the andante movement of God's sonata of creation. With slow and stately measure, patient and sure, the ascent pro-

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gressed from matter to man and from man to God.

The outside world has always invited human homage. Its processes, its manifestations, its beauties have led to its being invested with divine character and worshipped. It is a common belief among all men alike that God is associated in some intimate way with a part or the whole of the visible order, so honourable and great a thing is it. But the body, which gathers up the scattered leaves of the world's history into one compact volume, is an *édition de luxe* of creation, more honourable still, more likely to be valuable in the sight of God, more worthy of being the seat of His presence. In the light of evolution it is easier to believe that the body is divine than the universe that contains it.

There is no department of nature which man has not touched in the course of his upward rise from his protoplasmic begin-

MAGNITUDE

ning to his final development, and as yet,
high though he has mounted,

Man partly is and wholly hopes to be.

To-day the human embryo spends its nine months of darkness not idly, not unintelligently, but in learning the whole story of the world's yesterday and whispering it over to itself, so that when it emerges into the light it finds itself prepared, by a sympathy not less delicate than joyous with its appointed surroundings, for the home that receives it. It begins its progress at the bottom of the scale, listening first to the monotonous tones of existence that can only just be called life. Then in orderly succession it links its fortune with every phase of God's handiwork—with fish and bird and beast—until a man-child is born into the world.

No wonder that there are times when we feel a new experience to be old, as though we had been through it all before

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in a previous existence: for it *is* all old, we *have* been through it before. Each life in the making tastes of earth and air and sea, forest and mountain and plain; each life is thousands of centuries old, as old as God's first thought of creation. The history of the past is not foreign to us; we are at once at home in it as we turn its pages because we are of it: a while since we passed through its entire stretch, feeling its surface as the skilful fingers of a blind person feel the features of a friend or the petals of a flower. And we are incapable of forgetting what we thus learned. The world past and present, the world of men and things, is ours by virtue of experience. In a new sense may it be said that we came hither "trailing clouds of glory."

The only sympathy worthy the name is that which is the outcome of community of experience. Sympathy is the gentle

MAGNITUDE

offspring of essential affinity, recognized and used. There cannot be an iota of knowledge without affinity between the searcher and the thing sought. The student, whether of God or of science, begins with the assumption, or more strictly speaking the axiom, that the object of interest and investigation is fundamentally related to himself, otherwise he must become agnostic, for it would be folly to try to know the unknowable. The geologist can know nothing of the rocks unless in him and in the rocks is something common. The universe holds the rocks, and man holds in the small compass of his body the universe, its history and the choicest elements of its substance. Our sympathy with the nature outside of us is due to the fact that we have a similar though superior universe within us. It is as though we had gone through a garden of flowers culling out the best until our

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arms were full of the most representative, and knowing and possessing these we know and possess all. The Aristotelian idea of generation and embryology as set forth by the shade of Statius in the Divine Comedy¹ foreshadows latter-day science. The human foetus is represented as mounting from stage to stage of development—differing, for example, from the perfect starfish, “rose-jacynth to the finger tips,” in that it has capacity for further progress which the starfish has not—until “from an animal it becomes a human being.”

Browning, with fine imaginative touch, in a poem not often read,² tells the story of the ascent of man in phrases of modern terminology, noting the rich inheritance which ensues to man:

¹ *Purgatorio*, xxv, 31 ff.

² *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*.

MAGNITUDE

God takes time.

*I like the thought He should have lodged me once
I' the hole, the cave, the hut, the tenement,
The mansion and the palace: made me learn
The feel o' the first, before I found myself
Loftier i' the last, not more emancipate:
From first to last of lodging, I was I,
And not at all the place that harboured me.
Do I refuse to follow farther yet
I' the backwardness, repine if tree and flower,
Mountain or streamlet were my dwelling place
Before I gained enlargement, grew mollusk?
As well account that way for many a thrill
Of kinship I confess to, with the powers
Called Nature: animate, inanimate,
In parts or in the whole, there's something there
Man-like that somehow meets the man in me.*

The wet joys of the sea with its blustering waves and dancing lights, the "spring-fret" of the young men which sends their feet tripping to forest and field, the pleasant companionship of animals with their semi-personality, are intelligible and or-

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derly, and not chance mysteries. When Francis of Assisi spoke of his little sisters the birds, it was neither metaphor nor hyperbole, but simple truth recognized by a simple heart. These things being so, man is able to control natural forces and make them do his bidding, until steam is our willing Hercules and lightning our nimble Mercury. The myth of Orpheus finds its justification in history. The frigidly moral philosopher of Lake Walden, "defiant pantheist" that he was, could command even the homage of fish. By no arbitrary ruling or whimsical fiat did we men become lords of creation—not as masters become lords of their slaves by outraging liberty. Kinship and sympathy make us lords by the same inherent right that gives the brain control of the limbs. Nature touches its highest point of freedom, not to say joy, when the masterful human hand is laid upon its brow. Nature groan-

MAGNITUDE

eth and travaileth until then. *The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.* And when the Son of God appeared in His human body all nature came bowing to His feet, and men exclaimed that even wind and waves obeyed Him. It is good to personify nature and to contemplate its joy when some new revelation is laid bare and given to the race by men of insight. It is as the joy of a little child who has kept some sweet secret from its parents for the sake of the gladness that will come with the telling. To this end God made creation—that in due season it might be known, and so know itself, from base to summit. Through untold centuries in impatient silence and dumb expectation the world holds its treasures waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, until one by one, each on its appointed day, eagerly they shoot out into

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the light "like chrysalids impatient for the air," in response to the sympathetic beckoning of man: and the joy of nature is fulfilled.

A venerable thing, then, is the human body, even to that of the latest pink baby that is just beginning its experience amongst us. So venerable, so composite, so curiously wrought is it, that to honour it is to honour the story of creation and the whole universe; to defy the laws of its being or well-being is to heap contempt not on a moment of time but on the ages, not on one speck of matter but on the whole massive universe. "The basement for the soul's emprise," it is also the one nexus between ourselves and the world beneath our feet, the instrument through which nature imparts her secrets and by means of which she is enabled to break through her dumbness and sing her song of praise to God. Put your body into a disciplined,

MAGNITUDE

intelligent relationship with the universe outside of you and you will never know the meaning of physical loneliness. Earth and sea and sky will be full of sympathetic voices for you wherever you may be. Run counter to the decrees which made you the crown of creation, and the world of things, if it does not rise up and smite you hip and thigh, will at least rebuke you as Balaam was rebuked.



III DIVINITY

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. : John 1: 14.

See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having. : Luke 24: 39.

BUT nature is not complete until the Creator identifies Himself with His creation. When we think of the human body in the light of evolution does not the thought of the Word becoming flesh seem less impossible and more intelligible? In taking the manhood into God the whole universe shared in the dignity. The former could not happen without the latter following on. In a new sense all things rest in God in that it has been His good pleasure thus to *sum up all things in Christ* and through Him to *reconcile all things to Himself*. However intimate the relationship between Creator and creation may be, a higher relationship is con-

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ceivable—yes, necessary, for man is made in God's image—a relationship which became historical when the Babe of Bethlehem was born. Nothing is left out of the comprehensive embrace. With and in the human nature of Christ all things past, present and future are enshrined in the Godhead, and their flaws and incompleteness corrected.

What manifestations of His nature God vouchsafes in each of the myriad worlds that lie above and beyond this in which we live, no one can conjecture. But His ways and means are as luxuriant as His nature, and His nature transcends the infinity of space. Of course mere size is no criterion of value. The man on the mountain is greater than the mass of matter on which he stands. But it would seem to be waste if the vast stars are in the heavens merely to create pin-points of light for us to speculate on and wonder at. The

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probability is that, as their main function, they give foothold for manifestations of divine character which at present are beyond our apprehension, while the whole is held together in a conscious unity by the dim shining that twinkles out its sympathy to us and finds its response in our wonderment and that revelation of immensity of space, an appreciation of which could not be without the stars which are its measure. Apparently there is a sympathetic unity between the worlds which occupy space as great at least as that which exists between man and his immediate environment. It may be, then, —who can tell?— that the reach of the Incarnation knows no limits, and that the farthest star is touched by and gathered into it not less than our own special world.

The splendor of the human body was declared not merely by the fact that *the Word became flesh*, but also by the

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way in which He used it. It was the revealer of His inner self and the agent of His deeds of compassion. Transcendent joy shone through His body as light through a cathedral window; and when His soul mourned, His body shared the grief. Such majesty was uttered by His very bearing as to awe His companions and confound His enemies.

His body was the vehicle of healing power to others. Whoso touched even the hem of His garment with expectation and desire felt the vivifying shock of imparted physical vitality. When those about Him suffered from disease He repaired the disordered mechanism, so that the deaf heard, the blind saw, the dumb spake. Sometimes there came before Him cases of disintegrated personality, cases in which the body was possessed by something unholy that put it at odds with itself, and He restored order and unity,

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purity and peace. The body was never to Him as it were a glove, which could be considered apart from personality; nor can we think of Him looking with approval on certain experimentations in psychological phenomena indulged in to-day under the ægis of science which are akin to prostitution,—experiments in which persons are encouraged to induce a trance condition in order that (hypothetical) spirits may temporarily possess their bodies. The body was always and everywhere in His eyes a sacred thing, so sensitively refined that it would be defiled if its possessor harboured an unclean thought or let loose from the lips an unworthy word.

When the moment was ripe that He should suffer separation from His body He was in an agony, and He suffered it only for a moment; so perfect an instrument had it been that God would not al-

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low it to see corruption. A few hours and the mangled body of the Cross appeared as the resplendent body of the Resurrection. On earth it had but begun its work. It was not a tool suited merely to the conditions of time and space, but rather a tool prepared by mortal life for enduring conditions. As He had done His work with and in His body before the Cross, so He continued to do His work with and in His body after the Cross, calling special attention to the reality of His flesh as a truthful witness to His identity—*a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having*. It was spiritualized flesh, that is, that which was real before became doubly real now.

But the crowning thing was yet to happen. The Ascension followed: put into other words the totality of manhood including the body was taken forever into the secret recesses of Godhead—not to

DIVINITY

be lost in it, not to be consumed by it, but that humanity might reach the topmost pinnacle of glory beyond which no fuller splendor is conceivable. And so God's experiment of creation is proved beyond peradventure a success.

The knowledge that our human nature is so valued by God as to be worn by Him on earth and retained by Him in heaven, is in itself a powerful appeal to reverence the body whether in ourselves or in others. To honour it is to honour Christ who wears it in common with us; to dishonour our body is to dishonour His—to *crucify Him afresh and put Him to an open shame.*



IV SANCTITY

Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price. 1 Cor. 6: 19, 20.

UNTIL recent years it has never been difficult to conceive of God as dwelling in nature. It was only when the seemingly cruel processes that culminate in order and beauty came prominently before men that a check was put on the instinctive belief in His immanence. Now, at this later date, when love and self-sacrifice are found to be as constant factors in the upward rise of creation as the struggle for existence, we can once more look abroad on the unfolding bud and the spacious landscape, the minute organism and the towering mountain, without being mocked by the haunting spectre of a world that is red with rapine, tooth and claw, and can believe

CHAPTER FOURTH

without effort that God is in His handiwork. Assuming that He is, immanence calls for less energy of faith than the supplemental truth of transcendence. Mere immanence or pantheism is probably the most intuitive of all creeds. But if science is not in error in its declaration that human life is an evolution which has felt the feel of the lower in its royal progress toward the higher, and has kept the best of all the treasures touched, then belief in the indwelling Spirit, whether to form a church or to consecrate a person, is faith's simplest task. Indeed to accept the former is to accept the latter. If God is in the lesser much more is He in the greater; if in the base much more in the crown. And it may be added here without digression that until this height is touched evolution remains suspended in mid-air. The creature coming from God works its way through all things, and all.

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things work their way through it, only that it may at last reach the source of being, and touch and know and gather treasures from Him. God is in the world for nothing; the son of man is a crumbling thing, a blossom of promise devoid of the fruit of fulfilment, no matter what he has risen from; if human destiny be not to move on and up until the son of man becomes the son of God in reality and in deed as well as ideally. The beginning of things created must be the end, if there be such a thing as purpose or design in creation. A God who is Alpha can be nothing short of Omega. Hence the human Source is the human Goal.

It is a commonplace of the Christian pulpit that God's Spirit dwells in the human soul, but it is no less a Scriptural teaching that He makes a temple of the human body. Whoso honours the body honours God; whoso defiles the body insults God. [37]

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The body God's temple—what a pledge of the perpetual presence! What visions of fellowship, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the thought calls up! What assurances of help to know, to be, to do what God's eternal purpose designed for us it gives! There is something intangible in the thought of God's Spirit being in the soul; but when we think of God's presence in the body the perplexing half-truth is rounded out into a transparent whole. He is in each member,—eye, ear, hand,—to control and use, filling the body with His splendor as light fills a room. Antagonisms between the outer and inner self fade away, and body and soul melt into a God-governed unity. No longer do we think of the body being merely the vehicle of human expression, but also of the divine thought through the human. The Spirit of holiness lays hold of the bewildered human self in its

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entirety, and imparts to it whatever of the fulness of divine character it has capacity and willingness to receive: we become *partakers of the divine nature*. This is, to use an old phrase in a new connection, an extension of the Incarnation. The unique Incarnation of the Son of God upon and in whom the Spirit dwelt without measure in body and soul, is the starting-point of and means of producing the general incarnation by virtue of which sons of men become sons of God and temples of His Spirit.

The body that is consciously and repeatedly given over to God's indwelling Spirit, even here and now has marks of splendor that neither the skin-deep beauty of feature and complexion, nor the effulgence of the brilliant inner fires of genius can rival. When Moses returned from forty days of unbroken contemplation of God's moral law his very

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flesh was stung with an unwonted beauty that dazed his fellows. *How then shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory?* I have seen such majesty in a dying Christian's face, such grace in a deformed Christian's bearing, such rare lines in a tried and burdened Christian's features, as to give me a new understanding of the glory of God. There is a beauty of interior excellence that is cold and admirable. We retreat before it. But when the Spirit of God, who dwells in us almost whether or not we are willing, has been allowed through long years to control the behaviour of the body, the beauty that ensues is warm and inviting, commanding the unspoken homage of the least noble, rousing the aspirations of the flagging, and imparting its own sweetness and power to the receptive. Such beauty is more to be coveted by far than the stigmata, or marks of the Passion on

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hands and feet, longed for by the saints of old. Those who have it bear about in their bodies the indelible, unmistakable *marks of the Lord Jesus.*

The Spirit of holiness is the Spirit of wholeness or health. This does not mean that whoever surrenders the body to His keeping will escape sickness. Sometimes indeed it means, as in the case of Jesus, swift entrance into physical suffering, or death itself. We must not forget that on the Cross our Lord in a true sense tasted the fulness of sickness when His incomparable body was tortured by violence until its disturbed functions ceased to act, and He gave up the ghost. Sickness after all is the result of violence, so science says, —the violence of minute living organisms that prey on our bodies. What difference if the violence be from without, or from within?

No. Goodness is no more an insurance

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against sickness than it is against adversity. That is a conception which even the more advanced Jews declared false. But there is a relationship between holiness and bodily health under normal conditions which as yet is not wholly comprehensible. It stands to reason that if the body is intended by God to be the sole instrument by which the soul acts and through which it receives impressions there must be such intimacy between the outer and the inner that the health of the soul will find some expression in terms of the body. I have known faith so well trained by long exercise as to give that repose in an operation which proved the deciding factor between life and death. Nor can those many cures wrought by belief in the immediate touch of God be dismissed on the score of imagination or neurosis. The place in therapeutics which spiritual wholeness, or the vivid accept-

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ance into the life by faith of the Spirit of wholeness, occupies has not yet been discovered, though it is obscured by "medical materialism" on the one hand, and undisciplined credulity based on distorted idealism on the other.

But when all has been said and done there will always remain a vast world of suffering and that final assault on the vital functions which neither the holiness of the holiest, nor the skill of the most skilled, can arrest or cure. What then? Is there no gain from holiness in this connection? Ay, that there is. The body may have to say to the soul, "I lament that I may not accept your invitation to share your health," though that is not its last word. It proceeds to add, "None the less it is for me to aid you in making your wholeness more whole. Use me as a whetstone on which to sharpen your sympathy, to burnish your faith, to shape your patience." When

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the body cannot receive the soul's treasures it can increase these latter by its very weakness. God's Spirit dwelling in the twisted limbs and disordered organs finds there certain gifts which He passes on to the character. There is something profoundly true in the bold paradox of the brave consumptive¹ when he said, "True health is to be able to do without it." It is one of the splendid commonplaces of experience that from beneath the shadows of agony springs much of the spiritual heroism in which mankind exults, as characters mount with rapid strides on the rungs of the ladder of pain; while side by side with it moves the wealth of tender sympathy on the part of the well and strong with suffering and sorrow, that makes the darkest paths glisten as with sapphires and rubies and emeralds.

¹ *Robert Louis Stevenson.*

V

GLORY

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts. : Haggai 2 : 9.

It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption : it is sown in dishonour ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. : 1 Cor. 15 : 42-44.

THEN cometh the end. This delicate mechanism of the body must wear out; this universe within a universe must crumble into dust and leave no trace of its glory behind; this temple of God's Spirit must fall into ruins. Is not such a conclusion to this splendid thing, the body, a contradiction of its perfection? If it is susceptible to disease, if at last it collapses, is not the latest dynamo at least as perfect a construction? Glittering promise proves to be but a flimsy bubble, if this be the end. Is not permanence, durability, a necessary mark of perfection? In an absolute sense, yes; but in this world

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all is relative to that which is to be. Moreover a machine is perfect in the human meaning of the word if it lasts long enough to do the work which it was made to do, —in the case of the body to act as the medium of the soul's education and activities. The period may be long or short, a matter which is always in the hands of the Designer.

After all, the contemplation of eventual dissolution is not one of unmixed grief. There are very few, and these not by any means the choicest spirits in the world who would wish to continue life forever under conditions as we know them, even supposing disease were eliminated. The body would cease to be a friend and become a foe if it were to continue to hold us in this world after the time of training and experience was past. The perfection of the machinery, by the very fact of its being permanent, would become imper-

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fect. The inner part of the human self is not satisfied with the best the world can give. Those who are most abundantly fed by the rich food of God's treasures are the most hungry for that which lies beyond. Above the noblest achievement always towers that which mortal conditions cannot give foothold to. Only he who stands in the immediate shadow of the mountain peak appreciates its height. The greatest painting, the ablest book, the sweetest symphony, the truest self-fulfilment, in the mind of the author only creates new thirst, new visions, new disgust, new aspirations. Whatever else they may be, all masterpieces of achievement are just so many tokens of an unrest incurable on earth. Hence it is that

*Death, with the might of his sunbeam,
Touches the flesh and the soul awakes,
Then—*

There must be a dissolution, a purifica-

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tion, a new creation, and death is the beginning of it — a revolting beginning, when all the downward processes of nature league together to wring the soul from the body; and he is a poor creature indeed who can face it without being smitten with that deep homesickness for earth which bears testimony to the worthiness of the visible universe.

But there is a “smell of violets o’er the mould.” God is too jealous of that which came from His hand to allow it to sleep aught but a sleep of readjustment. Nor does He ever rob man of the least part of personality, so sacred a thing is it in His sight. He takes the body into His formative hand afresh at the hour of death, to remould it in final form.

It is as though we stood by to see the demolition of an ancient and stately mansion in order to give place for some superb and final triumph of architecture.

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The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts. What that glory is to be we know, for the pattern is before us in Christ who is the corner-stone of the new building. We learn the Resurrection characteristics in a superb chord of contrasts—transitory now, enduring then; cloud-flecked now, resplendent then; feeble now, mighty then; a shadow now, a reality then. In the old days there were times of friction, of shameful failure, of lack of sympathy between the outer and the inner; now the rasping dust of sin being forever done away, in the clear atmosphere of heaven the perfected body will do the perfect work of the perfected character. No duty will be a task, for all is joy when a worthy work lies before us with the certainty of success. The universe of the body will rise with the distinguishing marks upon it of triumphant human ex-

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perience under the domination of the Spirit of God. There will be visible in its splendors all the glory of things created from the moment when God laid the line and the plummet to His work until the final call of mankind to judgment. The human body without speech or language will sing *Benedicite*; in its perfection all the works of the Lord, sun and moon, wind and storm, beasts and cattle, fish and feathered fowl, woodland and boundless deep, will praise Him and magnify Him forever. What if the world of our present foothold has passed away!—though, perhaps, it too will have its resurrection and greet us with a new-familiar face. In each of us it will be preserved and made over.

That which was a temple before, wherein the patient Spirit suffered grief, will be a temple in which He will rejoice to dwell, for at its core will be a human will, “free,

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upright and whole," whose one pleasure it will be to pay Him undivided homage. Heaven will be a practical place enough if each human body is a perfected mechanism and a completed universe. But it will not be on that account undevo-tional. So at one will body and soul be that when the latter worships the former cannot but do likewise—a habit worth the learning here.

Such, then, is the destiny of man and with him the body that he wears, the splendor of whose future is reflected back until its rays illumine the body that now is.



VI
THEREFORE—

Glorify God in your body. : 1 Cor. 6 : 20.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. : Rom. 12 : 1.

THE trumpet-call of such a theme as has been holding our attention is too plain to be misunderstood or disregarded. For old and young, for stained and unstained alike it has a message, an appeal, a command, to worthy activity, to self-restraint, to purity. Though the donning of a progressive purity is but one way among many of honouring God in our bodies, so great a grace is it that it may rightly claim first place—and last, whatever lies between. Saint Paul seems to have had it chiefly in mind when his appeal went out to the voluptuous Corinthians to glorify God in their bodies.

The young, whose vision is deep and

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imagination quick, if once armed with the inspiring knowledge of the body's splendor, will perchance never allow it to be marred or smirched by gross sin or weak self-indulgence, but will rise from the snow-like purity of childish innocence to the flaming purity of a chastity unconquered and unconquerable; from spontaneous courage to reasoned self-sacrifice. I have seen boyish eyes so fathomless and pure that to look into them was to discern new ideals for one's self:

Such a courtesy

Spake through the limbs and in the voice

as denoted an untainted though not untamed character. The mountain-top of aggressive purity is impatient to feel the pressure of the young man's feet. Its summit, piercing heaven itself, was made for him, and he for it. Not only is it the vantage-ground of power—

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My strength is as the strength of ten

Because my heart is pure —

but also of great joy. Its heights can be scaled by him who wills. But there is one pinnacle rising in white grandeur above the topmost peak: it is reserved for those who, whether in the married or in the single state, have kept innocence, and whose unsoiled bodies are a fitting shrine for minds chivalrous and undefiled.

It is the mother's privilege to direct the first toddling steps towards the great ascent. Not words of warning and mystery, but words of inspiration and frank instruction are what will fire the boyish mind with jealous self-respect, youth's best armor. The wonders of physiology, the universe of the body, are material for stories calculated to capture young minds; and the Incarnation, with its sequence of the indwelling of the Spirit, and the body's final triumph over death

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are truths more captivating than the most highly coloured fairy-tale. It is from the mother's lips that little lads should learn the meaning of chivalry—to treat *the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters, in all purity*; how the knight blots his escutcheon when he insults womanhood, God's extraordinary vessel of purity, even by a single unconquered desire; that his mind should never harbour a thought that he would be ashamed to let his sisters know. It is from the mother's lips that fragrant girlhood should be told of her glory, and led to embrace shamefastness without prudishness, modesty devoid of self-consciousness.

The appeal is often made to men that they should teach the body to honour the soul. Good, but incomplete. We must go further and say that the soul must honour the body so that each may pay due homage to the other as the handiwork of

THEREFORE—

God, holy, beautiful and joyous. When the mothers of our land wear such doctrine in their hearts by the cradle-side and breathe its vibrant music into the ear of childhood, then will our *sons grow up as the young plants, and our daughters as the polished corners of the temple.*

Nor is the call to those who are stained less imperative. They too are bidden to purity. What if they may never stand just where unsoiled, triumphant innocence is throned! The less splendid heights, those which can be taken by storm by bodies once defiled, have a beauty all their own, a beauty which even the larger and spotless splendor can never know. Earth stands in need of a Saint Augustine not less than of a Saint John, of the woman who was once a sinner, as well as of Mary the Virgin, and neither type can do the task or fill the place of the other.

The school wherein the training of the

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soiled must take place is the school of fire—"the indubitable bliss of fire." In Dante's matchless picture of man's march to perfection he makes fire—that is, the self-discipline that is most searching and pitiless to wickedness—the chiefest instrument. At the centre of hopeless evil, where ice-bound Satan lies, is the chill of the poles—that is, quiescence, inactivity, death. But on the threshold of undying joy the restless flames with mercifully merciless tongues refine whatever they touch. The symbolism is not that of a superimposed infliction of God from which there is no escape. It is self-chosen. "I would have flung me," says Dante, "into molten glass to cool me, so immeasurable was the burning;" but he abides his time in the flames that he may at last reach the shore of his desire, and Beatrice. Searchers after purity are "ever on their guard

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not to come forth where they will not be burned.”

But side by side with discipline is the rapturous contemplation of chastity and the oft-repeated adoption of it in purpose until at last fire is conquered by fire and the impure become pure. “‘*Summæ Deus clementiæ*,’ I then heard sung in the heart of the great burning, . . . and I saw spirits going through the flames. After the end which is made to that hymn, they cried aloud: ‘*Virum non cognosco*’: then softly began the hymn again.” The words of the maiden Mother are not to be taken literally. They set the ideal for the wed as well as for the unwed. Each must aspire to live according to the prerogatives, discipline and laws of the state in which he finds himself.

To all the soiled who would be cleansed there comes, as came to Dante in his

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vision, the cheering song of God's glad
angel,

*Blessed are the pure in heart;
For they shall see God.*

THE END